



City of Hampton, VA

22 Lincoln Street
Hampton, VA 23669
www.hampton.gov

NOTICE OF ACTION

City Council - Civic Recognition & Public Comment Period

Wednesday, October 24, 2012 - 5:30 PM

W. H. "Billy" Hobbs, Jr.
Will Moffett
Chris Snead

Christopher G. Stuart
Donnie R. Tuck
George E. Wallace

Molly Joseph Ward, Mayor

Staff:

Mary Bunting, City Manager
Cynthia Hudson, City Attorney
Katherine K. Glass, CMC, Clerk of Council

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Vice Mayor Wallace called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. Mayor Ward was not present at roll call but arrived at 5:45 p.m.

INVOCATION - Vice Mayor George E. Wallace

Vice Mayor Wallace gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CEREMONIAL ITEMS - "SPOTLIGHT ON CITIZENS"

1. 12-0390 Recognition of Wynne Ford / Wynne Volvo for Sponsorship of Storytelling in the Park

ACTION: Presented by Vice Mayor Wallace to Dory Wade, Parts Manager of Wynne Ford / Volvo.

2. 12-0389 Recognition of Hampton Amateur Radio Operators

ACTION: Presented by Sara Ruch, Hampton's Deputy Coordinator of Emergency Management. Mayor Ward presented the placque. Ms. Ruch recognized Chris Hosman, Robert Uiterwyk, Addison Inge and Stu Flechner.

Following this presentation, the Mayor called for a five minute recess.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Clerk read the protocol for the public comment portion of the meeting. Mayor Ward indicated that, since there have been several questions, the Council has asked the City Attorney to share some information on freedom of speech. City Attorney Cynthia Hudson shared this information. Councilman Stuart asked for a brief summary of the statement.

Jonathan Deerfield spoke about the situation which occurred with Tom Gear at the last public comment session of City Council.

Rev. Marcellus Harris was critical of Police Chief Chuck Jordan being placed on administrative leave and stated his desire that he resign. He requested the resignation of City Manager Mary Bunting also. He was speaking on behalf of the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights.

Rev. Freddy Villarreal spoke in support of Chief Jordan and in appreciation of the process being used and in support of the City Council's recent actions. He stated citizens' perceptions are reality so Council should be intentional with communication and with processes. He stated there is perhaps a silent majority that is 100% behind Chief Jordan.

Ankh Unu-El (Brother Ankh) spoke on complaints against Chief Jordan filed by the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights and complained of police targeting of their members. The Coalition requested the resignation of Mayor Ward.

Kevin Watkins spoke as a member of the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights in opposition to the appointment of Tommy Townsend as Acting Police Chief and requested a community dialogue before the appointment of an acting chief. He said that Mary Bunting should step down as City Manager.

Debra Frazier of the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights spoke about the cigarette sting operation and requested the resignation of the City Manager.

Rudy Langford spoke as the President of the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights. He stated that the arguments made by Coalition members tonight call for the immediate resignation of City Manager Mary Bunting and Chief of Police Chuck Jordan. He alleged racism. He spoke of Former Delegate Tom Gear being arrested in Chambers for simply asking the Mayor a question. He stated he would not take bribes.

Karen Smith spoke in support of the Hampton Police Division stating they are one of the best police divisions on the East Coast. She stated that the investigative is not a witch hunt but a way to get to the truth about the very complicated cigarette

operation. She expressed her confidence in the leadership of the police division and of the officers. She asked that the investigation be expedited so the Chief can be put back to work.

Edwin Boone asked why citizens can't ask questions at Council meetings and if they can't then, when can they ask questions. He was critical of ordinances only having one reading. He prefers to sit down with Council members to ask questions. He stated the police sting was an embarrassment to the City of Hampton.

Police Chief Chuck Jordan addressed Council and said speaking while on administrative leave is unusual but administrative leave is no vacation. He complimented the members of the City Council, the City Manager, and the City Attorney and stated his belief in the process and encouraged them to seek the truth which will reveal itself in facts. He has faith that will be done and he is sure the right outcome will prevail. He stated that he gets aggravated when he hears people complain about our officers because he knows them to be committed and to serve with integrity.

Councilman Tuck asked if the City Attorney's office is coordinated the outside investigation. Ms. Hudson responded that she retained the external investigator but isn't overseeing and isn't involved in the investigation. She stated there is no reporting mechanism but the final report will be filed with the City Attorney and City Manager. Mayor Ward stated the matter wasn't on the agenda and this was a public comment period and Council needs to abide by their own rules.

John Ezzell, a member of the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights, had many questions about the cigarette sting.

Casey Ezzell spoke about her brother in law's death which should not be forgotten.

Candice Myers, as a member of the Coalition for Justice for Civil Rights, spoke on the cigarette sting operation and the statement by Virginia's Auditor of Public Accounts and stated the City Manager should resign.

Thurman Clark, a former police officer, spoke on his experience as a police officer for 27 years which included time as supervisor of special investigations. He offered to answer questions of members of City Council about special investigations.

3. 12-0392 Discussion of the Cigarette Sting External Investigation and External Audit to the Agenda.

ACTION: Moved to add a discussion of the external investigation and external audit to this agenda.

Councilman Tuck stated that the external investigation and external audit should be conducted by the City Council and the reports should be made to the City Council. Mayor Ward suggested the topic be placed on the next meeting agenda or at a special meeting where the public will have notice and which will also provide the City Manager and City Attorney time to respond. Councilman Tuck indicated the auditor and investigator are scheduled to begin their work prior to the next Council meeting. He stated that if a special meeting is required, he'd like to perhaps call a special

meeting to discuss that.

MOVER: Councilmember Donnie R. Tuck

SECONDER: Councilmember Will Moffett

AYES: 6 - W. H. "Billy" Hobbs, Jr., Will Moffett, Chris Snead, Christopher G. Stuart, Donnie R. Tuck, Molly Joseph Ward

NAYS: 1 - George E. Wallace

ABSTAIN: 0

OUT: 0

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Contact Info:

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